

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 SP-02 L-03 NSC-05 IGA-01

SAJ-01 COME-00 AGR-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 HEW-06 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 SCA-01 SCSE-00 USIA-15 EB-07

DHA-02 INT-05 PM-03 OMB-01 TRSE-00 BIB-01 /155 W

----- 014462

P R 110955Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3519

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS BUCHAREST 3201

GENEVA PASS UNDRO FOR BERKOL

FOR AID/FDRC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, RO

SUBJECT: DISASTER RELIEF: ROMANIA FLOOD

REF: (A) BUCHAREST 3155; (B) STATE 161606

1. DEPUTY FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER CONSTANTIN STASPIU
AND MINISTRY COLLEAGUES GAVE EMBOFFS FURTHER BACK-
GROUND ON FLOOD SITUATION AND ROMANIAN NEEDS JULY 10.
ALL AVAILABLE MANPOWER HAS BEEN MOBILIZED TO PREVENT
FURTHER DEVASTATION BY STILL-RISING DANUBE, STANCIU
SAID. FLOODING IS STILL UNDERWAY AND THEREFORE NO
MEANINGFUL ESTIMATE OF DAMAGE CAN YET BE MADE.
ONLY COMING WEEKS WILL SHOW HOW MUCH OF RAVAGED
WHEAT CROP CAN BE SALVAGED; INDICATIONS NOW ARE THAT
MUCH OF WHAT CAN BE SAVED WILL BE FIT ONLY FOR
ANIMAL FEED, THEREFORE SUBSTANTIAL IMPORTS OF WHEAT
FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION MAY PROVE NECESSARY. INDUSTRIAL
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DAMAGE EXTENDS TO 150 PLANTS AND FACTORIES; HERE

TOO NO FIGURE CAN YET BE PLACED ON LOSSES, BUT SITUATION IS CLEARLY WORSE THAN IN 1970. EFFORT NOW IS TO PROTECT AND RESTORE INFRASTRUCTURE, LEAVING DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS UNTIL WATERS RECEDE.

2. REGARDING REQUEST FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE, STANCIU AND COLLEAGUES CO T NTRATED ON ECONOMIC AID AND SUPPORT CALCULATED TO HELP ROMANIA REGAIN FOOTING AFTER FLOOD LOSSES. POINTING TO ROMANIA'S OBVIOUS NEED FOR INCREASED IMPORTS, ESPECIALLY OF CAPITAL EQUIPMENT TO REBUILD INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE, OFFICIALS SAID EXPORTS WVVYULD LIKewise HAVE TO BE EXPANDED TO GENERATE REQUISITE FUNDS. (HARDEST HIT, HOWEVER, WERE HARD-CURRENCY GENERATING INDUSTRIES SUCH AS CHEMICALS/PETROCHEMICALS AND TEXTILES). FOR TRADE WITH U.S., QUICK APPROVAL OF U.S.-ROMANIAN TRADE AGREEMENT AND CONSEQUENT MFN STATUS WOULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL. IN INTERIM PERIOD UNTIL AGREEMENT IS APPROVED, OFFICIALS ASKED FOR RESUMPTION OF EXIMBANK ACTIVITY AND PROVISIONAL APPLICATION OF MFN TARIFF LEVELS TO SOME ROMANIAN EXPORTS TO U.S. (E.G. MACHINE TOOLS, SYNTHETIC FIBERS, KNITWEAR, COTTON TEXTILES, HEMP AND FLAX FABRICS, READY-MADE APPAREL, AND FURNITURE). TO FURTHER BOOST EXPORTS TO U.S., OFFICIALS OFFERED TO SUPPLY ITEMS FOR U.S. MILITARY PROCUREMENT, ESPECIALLY UNIFORMS AND FOOD-STUFFS. THEY ALSO ASKED US TO PREPARE GROUND FOR EXPECTED ROMANIAN REQUEST FOR ABOUT \$50 MILLION IN CCC CREDITS FOR WHEAT, CORN, OTHER FEEDGRAINS AND PERHAPS OTHER AGRICULUTRAL COMMODTIES. FINALLY, THEY ASKED FOR USG SUPPORT FOR PENDING AND FUTURE ROMANIAN LONG-TERM CONCESSIONARY CREDIT REQUESTS FROM IMF, WORLD BANK, AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL FACILITIES. (AMBASSADOR WAS LATER INFORMED BY FINANCE MINISTER THAT AMBASSADOR BOGDAN WAS INSTRUCTED JULY 10 TO CONTACT IBRD AND IMF WITH REQUEST THAT IMF SEND SURVEY TEAM TO ROMANIA TO ASSESS DAMAGE WITH EYE TOWRAD ISSUING EMERGENCY LOAN).

3. COMMENT: EMBOFFS NOTED THAT ROMANIAN REQUESTS UNCLASSIFIED

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GO BEYOND TRADITIONAL SCOPE OF DISASTER ASSISTANCE, WHICH NORMALLY CONFINED TO IMMEDIATE HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AND SHORT-TERM REHABILITATION. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT SINCE DISASTER IS STILL IN FULL SWING, GOR HAS NOT HAD TIME TO FULLY THINK OUT NEEDS NOR AB ORB OUR EXPLANATION OF WHAT USG IS IN POSITION TO OFFER. ALSO, NOT ENTIRELY UNPREDICTABLY, GOR IS ATTEMPTING TO CAPITALIZE ON CALAMITY BY SOLITCITING SOME FORMS

OF ASSISTANCE ONLY INDIRECTLY RELATED, IF AT ALL,
TO FLOOD-CAUSE LOSSES. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT
LOSSES HAVE NOT BEEN OF MAJOR PROPORTIONS; WE HAVE
EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT ECONOMIC BLOW HAS
ALREADY BEEN MORE SEVERE THAN IN 1970. BUT WE WILL
JUDICIOUSLY EXAMINE REQUESTS WITH AN EYE TO
MAINTAINING PROPORTION BETWEEN U.S. ASSISTANCE
GRANTED AND REAL NEEDS. FOR THE MOMENT, IN ANY
CASE, BARRING MAJOR DANUBE FLOODING, IT APPEARS THERE
WILL BE NO RPT NO SIGNIFICANT NEED FOR EMERGENCY
RELIEF SUPPLIES SUCH AS MEDICINES, BLANKETS, COTS,
WATER PURIFICATION EQUIPMENT, ETC. WE SEE POSSIBLE
NEED FOR EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLIES AND SHORT-TERM
REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE, PERHAPS INCLUDING SEEDS,
WHICH WE WILL EXPLORE WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS.
ALSO, IN VIEW OF NATION-WIDE FLOOD-PREVENTION PROGRAM
WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN ANNOUNCED, WOULD APPRECIATE
GUIDANCE WHETHER WE CAN OFFER TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS ALONG LINES SPELLED
OUT IN AID HANDBOOK, SECTION II, CHAP 11, AND,
SECONDLY, WHETSBR HELP IN PLANNING ANNOUNCED WATER-
CONTROL SYSTEM MIGHT BE OFFERED BILATERALLY
OR THROUGH MLTIATERAL CHANNEL SUCH AS UN. IN THE
MEANTIME, WE RECOMMEND THAT U.S. SUPPORT ROMANIAN
REQUEST TO IMF TO SEND TEAM TO ROMANIA.
BARNES

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